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For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

INQUIRER has, with great propriety, brought before the view of the public the two jarring or contradictory accounts which have been published, in the *Belfast*, and in the *Gentleman's Almanack*, respecting the eclipse which is to take place the latter end of the ensuing month, for the laudable purpose of ascertaining which of them, if either, is correct. Agreeably, therefore, to his request, I shall attempt to place the subject in a clear point of view, so as to enable him at any time to know with certainty when an eclipse is to happen, whether it will be *solar* or *lunar*.

An eclipse of the sun, is occasioned by the moon, which is an opaque body, being interposed between the earth and the sun; but such interposition cannot take place at any other time than that of *new moon*, hence it is evident, that no eclipse of the sun can possibly take place at any other time; and as there will be an eclipse on the 29th of next month, but the *new moon* not being at the same time, that cannot be a *solar eclipse*.

An eclipse of the moon is occasioned by the earth being in a right line between the sun and moon, and preventing the light of the former from shining on the latter, and rendering her luminous; but the earth is not in this situation at any other time than at that of *full moon*, consequently there can be no eclipse of the moon but at the time of *full*,—and we find that the middle of the ensuing eclipse and time of full moon differ but six minutes, of course the eclipse must be lunar, as announced in the Belfast Almanack. The error committed in the Gentleman's Almanack on this subject, is, in my opinion, merely typographical, and not to be attributed to the calculator.

G. T.

Belfast, March 12, 1809.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ACCOUNT OF THE BARONY OF ARMAGH.

Concluded from p. 98, *No. VII.*

THE origin of this establishment will be found in the extracts from Harris' Hibernica, which are subjoined in the appendix to this work; but the school was not actually endowed till the reign of Charles I, as appears from the statutes.

From the earliest accounts of literature in Ireland it appears, that the city of Armagh was famous for learning; and church discipline was studied here with great exactness. It is said, so eminent was the College of Armagh for learned divines, that, in a synod, held in the abbey of Clane, in the county of Kildare, anno 1162, which consisted of the archbishop of Armagh, twenty-six bishops, and numerous abbots, it was decreed, under a solemn act, that no student should be admitted a professor of theology in the national church, who had not a certificate of his having duly graduated in the College of Armagh. And, in the Monasticon Hibernicum, it is copied from the Annals of Innisfallen, that "Roderic O'Conchobhair, king of Connaught, anno 1169, to advance learning in this university, granted to the head master an additional annual pension of ten oxen, and bound his successors to fulfil the said grant, on condition that a public school should be there kept open for all scholars from every part of Ireland and Scotland." In Sir James Ware's Antiquities of Ireland, he quotes, on the statement of Florence M'Carthy, that the number of students at one time exceeded seven thousand.

The instances, which I mentioned, of Lord Rokeby's regard for the prosperity of Armagh were gratefully felt by the inhabitants, and called forth their public spirit in an eminent degree. New streets were built, and all the offensive obstacles to improvement, or which this city had

been almost proverbially notorious, were removed; a strict observance of the police, and laws of the corporation was enforced; the streets paved and flagged; lamps were erected, and the best houses were adorned with iron railing in front. An elegant sessions-house was built at this time, and also a very handsome edifice for public assemblies, the profits of which were to be applied to charitable purposes. In this latter building the ball-room is sixty feet by thirty, with card and supper rooms on a large scale, and the kitchens and servants' apartments are suitably laid out. This building is not yet completed; I understand it has remained these some years past in its present state.

Lord Rokeby's purse was always ready to contribute to these laudable improvements, which were carried on under his sole direction, and proved his correct taste and judgment for all public works.

A very complete shambles, which are well enclosed, and elegantly constructed, were erected by him, and at his sole expense; and he set on foot the important work of supplying the town with pipe-water, which was not completed till after his death.

Lord Viscount Cremorne, who has a very fine property in this vicinity, handed over to the corporation the sum of 1000*l.* for the forwarding of this public work, which was by subscription lately completed. Pumps, at proper distances, are erected through the streets, for public use.

The barracks are of modern date, and are a very handsome building, well designed, covering an extensive area, which is well enclosed, and stands on a fine open eminence, fully commanding the county gaol, which is contiguous.

The gaol is also a modern and complete building, standing on a plain, with every advantage of good air, and proper accommodations for the prisoners; it is admirably planned as to strength and security.

I must here remark, that in every approach to this capital town, the grand appearance of public buildings, and the numerous improved demesnes in the environs, convey to the stranger the most respectable ideas of this district, which are by no means lessened as he enters the city, the streets being principally rebuilt on a regular elevation, and the houses neatly slated, almost all of them having marble window-stools, door-cases, and parapets, or eve courses. Indeed, in point of convenience of building materials, Armagh is very happily circumstanced, and is remarkably well situated, contiguous to the ports of Newry and Dundalk, for the supply of such necessaries as we cannot command at home.

The market place is triangular, and is on the declivity of the hill on which the cathedral stands; at the base are the ruins of a market house, which was begun by Primate Bolton, but I do not learn that it was ever completely finished. The best front faced the cathedral, and between these two buildings is the antique mutilated market cross.

It appears that the top of the cross has been damaged; the symbolic subject is Christ's crucifixion between the thieves, in old basso-relievo; the others are so much obliterated, that I leave their solution to more expert antiquarians; they appear rather a kind of rude ornamental fret-work, than any distinct characters.

The trade of Armagh is principally engaged in the linen manufacture, the market for which is held on Tuesdays, and it is averaged that 7000*l.* are weekly expended for webs in this market.

In so extensive and well appointed a town, it is unnecessary to mention that every necessary and useful branch of manufacture, the woollen trade only excepted, is more or less engaged in, sufficient for the supply of its inhabitants, and the country around; but though severally respectable, they are not of any particular note, nor have extensive capitals engaged in them.

The present Primate intends to present the town with an elegant market house at his own expense, and, as in point of situation, the county court-house is deemed very inconvenient, and an estimate of a new and grand edifice, to the amount of 6000*l.* for this purpose, is now before the grand jury, his Grace intends the site of the present building for that of the market-

house, which is certainly the best place it could be erected on, from its central situation and contiguity to the market place; the ruins of the present market house are indeed a disgrace to the town, and ill correspond with any of its public buildings. His Grace also intends to promote, as much as possible, the sale of wheat in this market, which it is strangely deficient in, as the principal part of this grain, which is raised in the vicinity, is sold in Portadown market.

A very fine mall, or terrace, has been lately enclosed with a dwarf wall, dyke, and iron gates, within which is a neat gravel walk, encompassing a lawn, for the enclosing of which Lord Rokeby procured an act of parliament, and it is but lately finished. This work was completed by subscription, which will be returned, as the rent produced from the lawn in some years will repay both principal and interest, after which the property of the land is vested in the sovereign and corporation of Armagh, by which the town is governed; it is but justice to this body to remark, that by their attention the police of this city is well regulated, nor is the eye disgusted, nor the passenger annoyed with any of those nuisances which too frequently disgrace many of the most respectable towns in Ireland.

Having faintly traced the princely munificence, the splendid liberality, and elegant taste of Lord Rokeby, in the city, we see in the adjoining demesne of the Primate a most magnificent palace, which he built for the residence of the archbishops of this see, and on this site he erected a very grand chapel for the use of the Primate's family, suitable to so princely a residence.

His Lordship also ornamented and planted the demesne in the highest modern style, which the present Primate has now occupied with the most improved systems of husbandry; indeed his Grace's farm-yard, implements of husbandry, and mode of culture, afford a bright example to the gentry, of what their valuable demesnes could yield under judicious management.

In the Primate's demesne a very elegant obelisk was erected by Lord Rokeby, in compliment to the late Duke of Northumberland, his lordship's friend and patron, on which is engraved a suitable inscription; this pillar is very ornamental, and cost above 1000*l.*

In the unlimited extension of Lord Rokeby's views, which were suitable to his generosity, his Grace had contemplated the pulling down the present Cathedral*, and erecting a very fine one at his own expense, when the old work of the tower proved too decayed to support a steeple and belfry; and, had he lived, he would doubtless have accomplished it. If any public work had not a fund sufficient for its completion, after a subscription had been taken, to which his Lordship was always a liberal donor, he lent the remainder of the required sum, for which he would never receive any interest.

There is scarcely a precedent of such a magnificent fortune having been expended, during the life of the proprietor, on the improvement of his own estate for the benefit of his heirs; how eminently luminous then was the generous spirit of Lord Rokeby, who bestowed all these advantages and solid gifts to the public, from which his family could never derive any revenue? I do not presume to say, that a life of celibacy should be one of the necessary qualifications for a public employment of great emolument, for without a liberal spirit it will avail but little, but happy it is for the nation, when such trusts are honoured in the care of so resplendent a generosity and correct taste, as the late Lord Rokeby possessed, and it is fortunate for the public, that those eminent virtues were not restrained in his Lordship by a matrimonial connection†. Had his Grace a wife or children, such a distribution

* His Grace the present Primate intends to build a Chapel of Ease to the Cathedral in the vicinity of Armagh, contiguous to the barracks and school, which is very requisite, as the Cathedral is quite too small for the large and encreasing congregation of this city.

† That his Grace was not an advocate for a life of celibacy is certain, but a disappointment in an attachment had, in early life, fixed his resolution of remaining single.

of his fortune would have been an unjust and unwarrantable sacrifice.

The virtues of this great man are too well recorded to require panegyric. My readers will doubtless expect to learn, that a kind acknowledgment of his eminent qualifications and liberality has been paid in the erection of a splendid monument to his memory, and in these pages to see copied an epitaph suitable to his love of literature, displaying the grateful feelings of the nation for the general good they derive from his liberality; of the opulent city of Armagh, for the local benefits she enjoys from his bounty; or of his lordship's successors, to whom he bequeathed such an ample fortune; but sorry am I to say, that no such affectionate memorial is in existence.

Although Lord Rokeby's virtues will not be forgotten, when the frail monuments of human ingenuity have mouldered into dust, yet so long as this dutiful tribute, this just debt is unpaid, the strong contrast of his Grace's liberality will add shame to the reproach, and confirm the disgrace either in a particular or in a general view.

Respecting this ancient see of Armagh, it is indeed a matter of surprize there are no public records. A few books or papers were purchased or procured from his friends by Lord Rokeby, which he bequeathed in such a manner, that they are not easily accessible, being left to the governors of the library in trust, the archbishop, for the time being, having power to take away any of them, provided he gives a receipt, binding upon him and his executors; and in his will he adds these remarkable words: "*My intention is, that the librarian, and the governors of the library, shall be excluded from the examination of these manuscripts, and that the trust shall extend no further than to the means of their preservation.*"

The antiquarian must therefore arrest his curiosity; it would be highly improper, if not impertinent, to wish to make public their contents, when a man of such superior understanding had reason to confide them to but one person in existence, and which doubtless he had every right to dispose of as he thought proper, they having been his private property. As the cause of this extraordinary concealment cannot be explained, it would be unjust, and ungenerous in the extreme to the memory of his Grace, were we to impute it to any illiberal motive, as to so base a principle his whole conduct through life was a direct contradiction.

The city of Armagh sent two members to parliament before the union, it now returns but one; the Primate has the patronage of the borough.

The county infirmary is within the town, and is very punctually attended to; besides the regular county charge, it is maintained by very liberal subscriptions and some annual bequests.

A charter school was founded in Armagh anno 1758, to which the Primate and corporation of Armagh gave twenty acres of land for ever, rent free, for the site and accommodation of the house. The first endowment of this charity was a gift of 40*l.* per annum, being a rent charge from Mrs. Drelincourt, widow of the dean of the see; it is now a noble institution and the most extensive of any of the kind in Ireland. COOTE's *Survey of Armagh.*

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

THE AUCTION.

Mercury.

THE hour is nearly arrived, and no purchasers have yet made their apperance. I fear we shall have a dull sale to-day.

Jupiter. Very possibly. In the mean time, however, put the several articles in their best dress, and brush them up carefully, that they may appear to advantage, and may invite bidders to purchase.

Mer. I shall do every thing in my power to recommend them to the attention of the company. *Jup.* I see a few coming forward; you had better prepare the lots and put the goods in order.

Mer. Gentlemen, attend. There will be no trust. Good bills will be taken, and an allowance of 5 per cent for ready cash. *Jup.* Begin with two or three private characters: it is better to reserve persons of distinction till more purchasers shall be assembled.

Mer. Here, Gentlemen, is a very gay and costly article; a lady of fashion. Her very dress, you see, is almost